

### Remarks

#### Oath/Declaration

The Examiner has indicated that the Declaration is defective on the grounds that (i) it does not identify the mailing address of each inventor and (ii) it does not identify the U.S. provisional application to which priority is claimed. Applicants submit that the information missing in the Declaration is not necessary for further consideration of the claims and therefore, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 111(b), Applicants hereby requests that the requirement to correct the defects be held in abeyance until an indication of allowable subject matter is received.

#### Amendment to the Specification

The title has been amended to more clearly reflect the scope of the claimed invention. As indicated throughout the specification, the claimed invention has a wide variety of uses in addition to sample preparation for 2-DGE.

#### Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 27 stands rejected as being indefinite on the ground that the preamble does not correspond to the method outcome in that the preamble recites a method for separating ligands from a sample while the final method step recites analyzing the remaining ligands. Claim 27 has been amended to recite indicate that the method includes recovery of a sample and to remove the final step so that the preamble and methods steps correspond. During the telephonic interview held Jan. 26, 2005, the Examiners indicated that the original claim was confusing in that it used the term "ligand" to refer to the specific predefined substances in the sample that are removed by the receptors and also to refer to substances that remain in the sample for subsequent analysis after removal of the specific predefined substances. The claim has therefore been amended to use the alternate term "components" to refer to substances remaining after the removal of the predefined ligands. The specification uses both the terms "ligand" and "component" to refer to substances that may be present in a sample, and the change is made simply for purposes of clarification. The claim language has also been simplified relative to the draft claim in order to enhance clarity, as suggested by the Examiners. Support for the addition of the "recovering" step is found throughout the specification, e.g., at p. 28, ~lines 3-4, indicating that samples

generated by the subtraction process were collected. During the interview the Examiners indicated that these amendments would be of considerable value in addressing their concerns.

Claims 35-38 stand rejected as being indefinite on the ground that the phrase "the process" lacks antecedent basis. The claims have accordingly been amended to replace "the process" with "the method" to provide antecedent basis. It is evident from the original wording of the claims that "the process" is intended to refer to the method recited in the claim on which the amended claim depends. Claim 44 has also been amended in the same manner. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 35 and 37 stand rejected as being indefinite on the grounds that the recitations of "the receptors" and "the same receptors" lack antecedent bases. Claims 35 and 36 have been amended so that the amended claims are dependent on claim 34, which contains the phrase "the receptors", thereby providing proper antecedent basis. Applicants respectfully submit that it is now clear that phrase "the same receptors" in claim 37 refers to "the receptors" referred to in amended claim 35. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 41-42 stand rejected as being indefinite on the ground that the recitation of "division" is indefinite because it is not clear whether "division" is based on a numerical division and/or a functional and/or structural division. While Applicant maintain that the meaning of "division" is clear from the specification, the term has been removed from the claims. In claim 42, to indicate that the receptors are distinct, the claim has been amended to recite that the receptors have different binding specificities, as indicated on p. 15, lines ~29-31 through p. 16, line 3. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 44 stands rejected as being indefinite on the ground that the recitation of "modified ligand-containing sample" lacks antecedent basis. Applicants have amended claim 27 to refer simply to a "modified sample" to provide antecedent basis and have amended claim 44 accordingly, but submit that the amendment does not change the meaning or scope of either claim 27 or claim 44. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

#### Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 27-42 and 44 stand rejected as being anticipated by Wheatley, 603 J. Chromatogr. 273 (1992), hereinafter "Wheatley". The Office Action states that Wheatley teaches a method for separating ligands comprising removing at least two specific predefined ligands and